



City of Asheville  
Office of the Mayor

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August 12, 2011

Federal Communications Commission  
c/o Marlene Dortch, Secretary  
445 12th St., SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Baker, Clyburn, Copps, and McDowell:

My town, Asheville, NC, is the largest town in Western North Carolina. We're home to the Biltmore estate and hundreds of thriving small businesses, including many art galleries and retail boutiques. We also sit at the foot of the beautiful Smokey Mountains. Despite these attractions, our region is the victim of a "brain drain" as some of our best and brightest young people leave us for jobs in larger, more urban areas. As mayor, I struggle to find ways to make the community more appealing so Asheville's children will stay and raise families here.

One way to do make our community more attractive to young workers is to improve access to cutting-edge technologies like high-speed wireless broadband. Not only will wireless broadband access allow our young people to keep in touch with friends and families in other parts of the state and country, it will also allow them to work for those big city companies - from the comfort of their homes in Asheville. The video conferencing and other telecommuting possibilities that wireless broadband affords mean Americans can work for any company, from almost anywhere.

I understand as part of the its agreement to merge with T-Mobile, AT&T has promised to invest an additional \$8 billion to bring high-speed wireless broadband to Americans. Under its current plans, AT&T's high-speed wireless network is expected to bring coverage to 80 percent of Americans. With the funds that would flow as a result of a successful merger, that percentage would climb to 97 percent.

My community is one of those that would benefit from this improved access, which is why I urge you to quickly approve this merger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Terry Bellamy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Terry" and last name "Bellamy" clearly distinguishable.

Terry Bellamy, Mayor  
Asheville, NC